cleared during current financial year progressively.

V.P.T.'s in Gujarat

3252. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of villages in Gujarat provided with village Public Telephones and total number of villages without public telephones as on date;

(b) how many villages in the State are likely to be provided Public Telephones during 1999-2000; and

(c) by when rest of the villages of the State will be provided with public telephones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE BSf THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRITAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 13,923 villages have been provided with Public Telephone facility and 4,202 villages are without Public Telephone facility in Gujarat as on 1.4.2000.

(b) During 1999-2000, Public Telephone facility was not provided in any village as the remaining villages are to be covered by a private operator who is yet to start service.

(c) All the remaining 4,202 villages will be provided with Public Telephone facility by March, 2002 progressively.

Release of commemorative stamp in the name of Kittur Rani Chennamma

3253. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many stamps and coins were brought out during 1999-2000 in commemoration of various personalities;

(b) whether Karnataka Government had requested to bring out stamps and coins in commemoration of Kittur Rani Chennamma;

(c) if so, the action, if any, taken in this regard; and

(d) the details of the stamps proposed to be released during 1999-2000 in commemoration of personalities of Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) During 1999-2000, 38 (Thirty Eight) postage stamps and 2 (Two) commemorative coins were brought out in commemoration of various personalities.

(b) Yes please. A proposal to bring out a stamp in commemoration of Kittur Rani Chennamma was received from Karnataka Government. No request, however, was received for issue of commemorative coins.

(c) Existing guidelines for issue of commemorative postage stamps stipulate that stamp on a personality may be issued on birth centenary or 10th/ 25th/50th/100th etc. death anniversary and the personality should be of national/ international importance. The guidelines also lay down that not more than one stamp may be issued on the same personality. A stamp on Kittur Rani Chennmma was already issued by the Department of Posts on 23.10.1977. Therefore, the proposal for issue of another stamp does not conform to the stipulations of the guidelines.

(d) Incommemoration of personalities of Karnataka, the following stamp was iusued during 1999-2000.

Name of the stamp	Date of Issue
Dr. T.M.A. Pai	09.10.1999

Tenders for cellular equipments

3254. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecom Services will be entering in the Cellular Services segment in all the State, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 5th April, 2000;

(b) if so, by when Tenders for cellular equipment are likely to be invited by Government

(c) whether DTS will also be aggressively competing with the private operators in all the States;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and